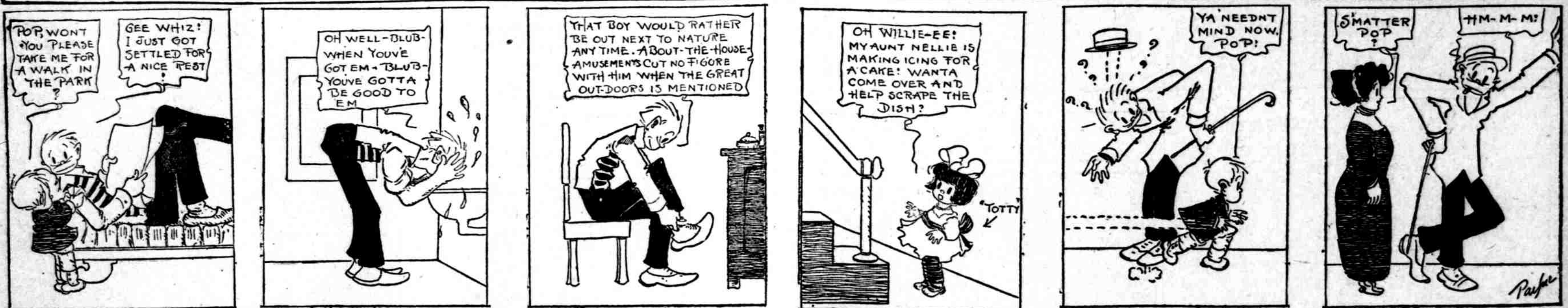


## "S" MATTER, POP?"



THE TIMES DAILY SERIAL STORY.

## THE FIGHTING BLADE

By BEULAH MARIE DIX  
(Copyright, 1913, Frank A. Munsey Company.)

## Synopsis of Preceding Chapters.

On an April evening in the year 1861, in the English town of Oxford, Wm. Musgrave provoked a challenge to a duel from a German youth whom he had found in a room at the Victoria Hotel. The challenger, a young man named von Kerstenbroock, was a student of the Victoria Hotel, and was a member of the Victoria Hotel. The challenge was accepted, and the two men fought a duel. The result was that von Kerstenbroock was killed, and Musgrave was wounded. Musgrave was taken to the Victoria Hotel, and he died there. The story of the duel was told to the Victoria Hotel by a young man named John Staversham, who was a student of the Victoria Hotel. Staversham was a member of the Victoria Hotel, and he was a student of the Victoria Hotel. The story of the duel was told to the Victoria Hotel by a young man named John Staversham, who was a student of the Victoria Hotel. Staversham was a member of the Victoria Hotel, and he was a student of the Victoria Hotel.

## CHAPTER XXIII.—(Continued.)

She would herself be torn, piece-meal, and she suffered them to reach him, the lad to whom she felt that she stood as mother.

The clock struck 6. Joan came again with food and the promised ointment, and on her head she leisurely, rustling in her silken skirts, came Eleanor Vyvyan, at her father's shrewd behest.

"Well, child," she spoke, and sat herself upon the edge of the bed.

Thomine gave thanks that, in the lengthening shadows, the bed was now in dusk to mask her features, and she saw that he is the hero of her drama, she hides him in her bed, while the nurse comes to change the sheets.

"What ails thee, sooth?" asked Eleanor.

Joan stepped to her shoulder.

"Your lawship," she whispered in Eleanor's ear, "I do not mind me so much as I do my father. I would not have it noised abroad. Yet to your lawship I may name it. 'Tis an old woman's fancy, perchance. She had a look that likes me not. If it prove smallpox—"

"Ah!" said Eleanor. With deliberation, no haste, she moved from the bed. What should Ned Borlase or another think of a nurse whose face was pitted with scars?

"Give thee good night, Thomine, and good rest," said Eleanor, with a breath like sobbing.

The clock struck midnight.

Up and down King's Staversham and his men still drove their barred search.

In her chair by the hearth Joan Laycock slumbered; how should she leave her mistress and she sickening, it might be, with disease whose very name was dread?

In the curtained bed Thomine, wakeful and tense with the memory of that tumultuous day, with foreboding of the day to follow, heart a soft stirring ocean, the coverlets toward the wall.

"Little Vixen!"

"What wouldst thou?"

"Thou art not sleeping?"

"Nay."

"I am fain to tell thee—life hath come again into my wrists. They ache most dreadfully. His tone was joyous.

"Oh, from my heart I'm glad!" cried Thomine, and knew not whether she were the gladder for the relief that had come to him or for his instant recognition of the fact that she had right to share in that relief.

Impulsively she stretched her hand across the bed and felt it caught, as she had looked to find it, to a strong clasp, and then, not as she had expected, felt hot lips assuaged against it.

Thomine withdrew her hand and lay gazing into the dark. She was happy. Why not happy, she who had mothered him through all the day—she who had had that now his troubled heart was set at ease?

"Poor lad," she thought. "My lad!"

Twelve hours before it had been but "thou lad."

Between the two there lay a vast difference.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Parting in Darkness.

With the dawn of the next day, the Friday that should have seen the gallows of King's Staversham employed, rose Colonel Erisey from two hours' fitful sleep, and went again, gray-visaged, to his hunting.

He must find von Kerstenbroock. He made no doubt else that he should be broken of his colony.

And surely he should find him somewhere, either in the house or the park of the castle.

That he should already have escaped

beyond the walls were a disaster not to be thought of.

No, Heaven was merciful! He still was in King's Staversham, Erisey repeated to himself. But, doubtless, he had confederates. There was the rub.

Whom to trust in King's Staversham? That man was true? Not only must Erisey search and search, but he must himself overlook all search.

All the Thursday Erisey had led his men—he knopped them trustworthy, but was in doubt—upon the chase, with pause only to eat and drink—to drink more than to eat.

Inspired of the drink, he had become convinced that he was likely to find von Kerstenbroock in his friend Aubrey's quarters in the village.

He had hinted as much to Aubrey, and then had been shocked into entire sobriety as he saw the face that Aubrey turned upon him.

"Nay, Jack, your word—" He would have patched up matters with his one-time friend.

"You shall search my quarters, but others than you shall be present. I appeal to my Lord Staversham."

No help for it! Staversham, past the point of toying with his comit box, had stood whitely by while Erisey, lashed with the shame of his own making, overhauled the cottage where Aubrey lodged, and at Aubrey's instance, dreadfully ransacked the houses and stables of the village.

He had found Erisey would have given the soul out of his body, could he have unearthed von Kerstenbroock for Aubrey's discomfort!

Grimly, Aubrey watched him work.

"Needless to say, my lord," he spoke, "I have beat o'er this ground some hours since."

Between two horns of a dilemma, Aubrey showed a harassed face and a hot temper on that troublous Thursday.

As von Kerstenbroock's friend, he had given silent thanks when he first heard that even as he half hoped, von Kerstenbroock had by some miracle contrived to escape.

As a King's officer, next moment, he was weighed down with fear of what harm von Kerstenbroock, cool, resourceful, capable man, he, better than any in King's Staversham, might do, might work their garrison.

He wanted him to escape. He wanted him to be captured in such place that he would be the spectacle of Erisey's misery.

"Now, hark! are you satisfied that I harbor not the enemies of the King," he spoke, when he saw the search was ended.

"But for this doubt that you have cast upon mine honor, and for other matter, too, wrought upon the body of the man who was once my friend, all you shall hereafter give me satisfaction."

To be sure, a duel was not then to be, and they both colonels of the King, in service at what, they must confess, was an imperial war, knew him.

But later, inevitably, it would come to pass. He had been challenged of Colonel Aubrey. That pleasant, pleasant Erisey brought with him when he came from his troubled sleep upon the Friday morning.

Heavily he went about the search that he knew was hopeless, yet would not admit to be so. He had no course save to walk in his old tracks, like a lost traveler.

Oh, little of me!" gulped Thomine. Poor, little, brave Vixen. She felt the strain of the long hours of danger begin to wear upon her.

She had wondered, on waking from her short night's sleep, how ever she should manage to win through another day.

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day. But she had Joan, grim tower of steel, beside her.

Joan had set aside her burn in a shawl, laid upon the hearth, and Joan it was who opened to the harassed Erisey.

"I must here make search," was Erisey's curt greeting.

"Surely, sir," Joan answered, curtly. "But stay till I may cast a robe about my lady, and bear her into the next chamber. I would not have her frightened, not for worlds, and she like to break out at any hour of smallpox."

He sniffed the heavy odor of the room and felt it sickly.

"Well, not very the lady long," he said. "Open the chest! Cast forth that stuff!" he bade the musketeer who followed him.

"Well!" said Joan, as she saw poor Thomine's garments flutter forth. "Only that said, but what she lacked in words she amply supplied in tone. Erisey looked foolish, as well he might, above the wreck of Thomine's finery."

Angered at the ill figure that he cut, he strode toward the bed, with an uncertain step.

"Come, mistress," spoke Joan. Old, hard-visaged woman that she was, she stood whitely by while Erisey, lashed with the shame of his own making, overhauled the cottage where Aubrey lodged, and at Aubrey's instance, dreadfully ransacked the houses and stables of the village.

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infection of hearing Erisey fall into difficulties in a nearby chamber, which was Lory Trevor's, and Trevor very faint to have his sleep out in peace and quiet.

After a leisurely long time Joan came back to the bed.

"I have made the door fast," she said, "and to any that knock, if such there be, I shall say you sleep and must be let in quiet. Now, Mr. Castinbrook—she lowered her voice—"best forth for a space, else thou'lt smother 't this thicksome air."

She sat down by the window, as far as might from the hearth, with its useful and none too odorous herbs, and fell to her knitting.

Thrillily she had done the better part of a stocking since yesterday morn.

Quiet as a jungle-cat, von Kerstenbroock swung himself across the foot of the bed and perched on the edge.

Frankly he stretched himself, then fell to tender contemplation of his bandaged wrists. He flexed his fingers eagerly.

"This night I can be gone," he spoke. Thomine, among the pillows, clasped her hands tight and pressed them to her breast. The joy to mother him seemed in that moment little worth the pain of seeing him so soon part from her care.

"Thou goest to danger," she said. "I stay to greater danger," he answered.

A Continuation of This Story Will Be Found in Tomorrow's Issue of The Times.

Loveless Marriages Are Called Curse of Nation

NEW YORK, May 24.—"Commercialized matrimony" is what is damning the American nation," declared Rev. Dr. A. Edwin Kelgwin, of the West End Presbyterian Church, in the course of his sermon on "Husband and Wife."

"By commercialized matrimony," he continued, "I mean that kind which is so common today and which is often loveless. It may have attraction and all that, but when the beauty is gone and the money is gone then the so-called love is gone. There are thousands of such marriages, and such marriages lead straight to Reno."

Sentiment, Dr. Kelgwin believes, should dictate certain changes in the wedding ceremony. "With all my worldly goods I thee endow," smacks too much of the deal of commercialism, he thinks. It should be, "With my best love I thee endow."

Dream Came True.

PATERSON, N. J., May 24.—Samuel Medinokow dreamed that his home and store had been robbed. Investigation proved the dream true, and he called the police saying he "had been robbed in both places."

Wayland, Mass., May 24.—Fanciful, fruit, and nuts comprised the first "fruition" dinner served by Mrs. W. F. Henderson, president of the Anti-Vivisection Association, to thirty girls.

## PLAN RESEARCH IN AVIATION PROBLEMS

Committee Named to Revive Laboratory Used by Langley at the Smithsonian.

Aerial locomotion problems will be studied in the Langley aerodynamical laboratory of the Smithsonian Institution as the result of the organization of the advisory committee with the cooperation of President Wilson.

The committee is chairman of the new advisory committee, and Dr. Albert F. Zahm is recorder. The function of the laboratory will be research work in aerial problems with a view to promoting the effectiveness of aerial locomotion for the purposes of commerce, national defense and the welfare of man.

Members of the advisory committee are as follows: Brig. Gen. George P. Scriven, U. S. A.; Maj. Edgar Russell, U. S. A.; Capt. W. I. Chambers, U. S. N.; Naval Constructor H. C. Richardson, U. S. N.; Dr. W. J. Humphreys, Dr. S. W. Stratton, Dr. Albert F. Zahm, Orville Wright, Glenn H. Curtiss, John Hays Hammond, Jr., Dr. Charles D. Walcott.

The following sub-committee plan has been submitted: Subcommittees on collection and correlation of aeronautical information, Dr. A. F. Zahm, chairman.

Subcommittees on publication and dissemination of aeronautical information, Dr. A. F. Zahm, chairman.

Subcommittee on aeronautical meteorology, Dr. W. J. Humphreys, chairman.

Subcommittee on comparative tests and standardization of instruments, motors, and propellers; tests of the tensile, compressive, and bending strengths, and elasticity, weight, etc., of various materials used in aeronautical construction, and determination of aerodynamical constants, Dr. S. W. Stratton, chairman.

Subcommittee on hydro-mechanic experiments in relation to aeronautics, Naval Constructor H. C. Richardson, chairman.

Subcommittee on naval air craft construction and design, Capt. W. I. Chambers, chairman.

Subcommittee on military air craft construction and design, Major Edgar Russell, chairman.

Served "Fruitarian" Dinner.

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Woman's Safety

## Employee of Postoffice Takes Baltimore Bride

James H. Reeve, a clerk in the Post-office Department, living at 45 K street, northeast, and Miss Mary E. Waters, of Baltimore, are on a honeymoon trip after being married here by the Rev. Harry L. Hout, pastor of the Marvin Methodist Episcopal Church. The bridegroom is sixty years old and the bride fifteen years his junior.

The couple sought out the Rev. Mr. Hout, to whom they were unknown, and said they were being married here instead of Baltimore because they "desired no publicity." The seashore has claimed them for their honeymoon.

West Virginia's Chief Meets Labor Leaders

CHARLESTON, W. Va., May 24.—Eugene V. Debs, Victor Berger, former Wisconsin Congressman, and several other Socialists conferred with Governor Hatfield on West Virginia labor conditions.

Before meeting Berger and Debs, Governor Hatfield had released from jail the Socialist party leaders in this State who had been charged with inciting riots in the Paint and Cabin Creek coal fields.

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J. S. TYLER, Chemist, Washington, D. C.

## Mountaineer Killed In Fight Over Girl

LEXINGTON, Ky., May 24.—A love affair with a young mountain girl caused a duel in the mountains in which twenty shots were fired and one man was killed.

William Collins, thirty years old, made a remark which Almandas West resented. Later they met and began firing. Collins was killed. West surrendered and is in jail.

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